Base-stations for cellular phones

961. SHRI MATILAL SARKAR: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the number of mobile phones and the States selected for base-stations for the purpose of introduction of cellular phones in different States of the North-Eastern Region;

(b) the criteria and policy for determining the number of mobile phones and selecting base-stations and the policy thereof;

(c) whether the State Governments were taken into confidence while determining the criteria and the base-stations; and

(d) if not, whether the policy would be reviewed before execution?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) Sir, presently, Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL) and M/s. Reliance Telecom Limited are providing Cellular Mobile Telephone Service (CMTS) in North Eastern Region. Another Cellular operator, M/s. Hexacom India Limited, has also been granted licence to operate CMTS in North East Telecom Circle Service Area; however, they have not started their service as yet. CMTS is being provided in Guwahati and Shillong by M/s. Reliance Telecom Limited. BSNL has so far launched its Mobile Services in the State Capitals of Nagaland and Manipur. The names of the States scheduled for introduction of Cellular Phones by BSNL and corresponding number of Cellular phone connections are as under:

Sl. No.	Name of State	Number of Cellular Mobile Phones planned
1	Arunachal Pradesh	14300
2	Manipur	8300
3	Meghalaya	7300
4	Mizoram	8300
5	Nagaland	8300
6	Tripura	6300
7	Assam	42550
	TOTAL:	95350 lines

(b) to (d) As per the Licence Agreement for CMTS, in Telecom Circles, atleast 10% of the District Headquarters (DHQs) are to be covered in the first year and 50% of the District Headquarters within three years of effective date of Licence. The licence is also permitted to cover any other town in a District in lieu of the District Headquarters. There is no requirement of mandatory coverage of entire service area with the service. The choice of District Headquarters/towns to be covered and further expansion beyond 50% District Headquarters/towns lies with the Licensee depending on their business decision. The base stations are planned and located by a service provider depending on techno-economic considerations to provide service to the end users. However, BSNL has made plans for coverage of DHQs, important tourist and pilgrimage centres, important National Highways etc. Based on this, the cellular capacity has been planned for various States in North Eastern Region.

Mobile phone services in N.E. Region

962. DR. KARAN SINGH: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided to extend mobile phone services to the entire North-Eastern Region and other border areas by the end of the year 2003;

(b) if so, the areas not covered by such services in the beginning of the year, and the progress so far, made in covering these areas by such services, indicating the operators who have undertaken to provide such services in the respective areas and the terms of the undertakings; and

(c) the details of the projects to cover the rest of the NE Region?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) and (b) Sir, the Government is not directly in the business of providing any telecom Service. However, the Government Companies, Mahanagar Telephone Nigam Limited (MTNL) and Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited (BSNL), provide Telecom Services in the country. BSNL has planned to provide Cellular Mobile Telephone Services (CMTS) in North Eastern (N.E.) Region during the current financial year. The States of Arunachal Pradesh, Manipur, Mizoram,